Forest Practices Board

SERVICE PLAN
2003/04 – 2005/06

February 2003

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Accountability Statement

The 2003/04 – 2005/06 Forest Practices Board Service Plan was prepared under my direction in accordance with the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act*. I am accountable for the basis on which the plan has been prepared. The plan was developed in the context of the government's *New Era* commitments, which are to be addressed by May 17, 2005. All material fiscal assumptions and policy decisions as of January 28, 2003 have been considered in preparing the plan and I am accountable for achieving the specific objectives in the plan.

W. N. (Bill) Cafferata, R.P.F.
Chair
Forest Practices Board

Message from the Chair

This is the second annual service plan prepared by the Forest Practices Board for presentation to the B.C. Legislature under the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act*.

This plan outlines the results the Board expects to achieve in the three-year period from 2003/04 through 2005/06 with the funds voted to it by the Legislature, providing an accountable basis for judging the Board's performance.

The service plan also provides a strategic context that guides the Board's current activities. Looking to the future, we continue to refine our strategic objectives, the linkages to our business areas, and the performance measures by which the Legislature and the public will be able to track our progress over time.

It is the Board's intent to continue the delivery of its mandate through its audit, investigation, review and appeal, and reporting functions, while adapting its process to meet the challenges of the impending *Forest and Range Practices Act*.

As Chair of the Board, I am accountable for the basis on which the service plan is prepared and for achieving the specific objectives in this plan.

W. N. (Bill) Cafferata, R.P.F.
Chair
Forest Practices Board

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Strategic Context

Board Overview

The Forest Practices Board was created under the *Forest Practices Code of British Columbia Act* (the Code) as an independent watchdog for the public interest in B.C.'s public forests. The board's mandate is to: audit tenure holders and government ministries for compliance with, and enforcement of, the Code; deal with complaints from the public regarding forest planning and practices, and government enforcement, of the Code; carry out special investigations and issue special reports as the Board sees appropriate; request administrative reviews of approved forest development plans; participate on behalf of the public in reviews of penalty determinations; and participate in appeals to the Forest Appeals Commission.

Code legislation ensures Board independence from licensees and the government. While the Board provides reports to the Minister of Forests, the Minister of Water, Land and Air Protection, the Minister of Sustainable Resource Management, and the Minister of Energy and Mines, its reports and findings are not provided to government for revision or comment in advance of public release. When the Board deals with an audit of or complaint about a government operation, that operation is entitled to the same level of information about the Board's preliminary findings as any other auditee or complaint subject.

The Board also has the authority of the *Inquiry Act* to compel the giving of evidence in the course of its investigations, and it has the authority to audit and investigate government's forest practices and enforcement actions.

The Board's funding is determined directly by Treasury Board.

Planning Context

Macro Trends:

- Growing global recognition of the ecological value of B.C. forests.
- Government moving towards performance-based regulation and professional reliance.
- Consumer preferences for "environment-friendly" products are leading to buyer demands for "certification" of wood products.
- Increasing competition for finite forest resources (timber and non-timber).
- Forest companies are increasing efforts to manage and prevent conflicts over forest resources.

Opportunities:

- Provide more useful and appropriate information on achievement of sound forest practices on the ground.

- The industry trend toward third-party stewardship certification audits can provide complementary information on the industry's forest practices performance.
- Demonstrate to the world that B.C. forestry practices are sustainable and maintain high environmental standards.

Challenges:

- Transition to a new Code before knowing the final form of the Code and its regulations.
- Potential increase in local and international protests and boycotts of forest products in response to perceived deregulation.
- Potential loss of British Columbians' autonomy and authority to international interests over what are acceptable forest practice standards.
- Landscape level objectives for resource management are still not established in many areas of B.C.
- Economic and fiscal health of government and industry.
- Public expectations for quality service.

Vision

Forests that are soundly managed to sustain the full range of forest values and forest resources for British Columbians.

Mission

The Board serves the public interest as the independent watchdog for sound forest practices in British Columbia.

Values

The Board:

- acts on behalf of the public's interest, not those of any single group;
- is straightforward in its approach;
- emphasizes solutions over assigning blame;
- behaves in a non-adversarial, balanced manner;
- treats all people with respect, fairness and sensitivity;
- performs in a measured, unbiased and non-partisan manner;
- carries out its mandate with integrity and efficiency;
- provides clear and concise reports to the public;
- bases actions and decisions on knowledge, experience and common sense; and
- is accessible and accountable.

Goals

- Public confidence in accurate and impartial reporting of forest practices.
- A fair and effective means to deal with public concerns about forest practices.
- Forest practices that are widely recognized as sound and continually improving.

Core Business Areas

Forest practices audits, investigations and reports

Provide the public with credible information about the state of forest practices, validate sound practices, and recommend improvements.

Complaint investigations, administrative reviews and appeals

Provide the public with a readily accessible means to have their complaints and concerns regarding forest practices considered and addressed.

Executive and support services

Provide strategic and operational directions and the infrastructure necessary to support the Board's programs.

Objectives and Strategies

1. Objective:

A redesigned Board role in the context of a results-based Code, greater reliance on professionals and industry self-regulation.

Strategies:

- Work with government agencies in drafting legislative changes to Board role as part of a new, results-based Code.

2. Objective:

Assessments of the efficacy of the Forest Practices Code, and the new *Forest and Range Practices Act*, in achieving desired results on the ground.

Strategies:

- Pursue legislative change to clarify the Board's mandate to evaluate and report on the effectiveness of the results-based Code.
- Evaluate and report on the effectiveness of the results-based Code in achieving specified environmental objectives.
- Monitor public concerns to identify key issues for consideration when setting priorities for special investigations.
- Synthesize and report information from audits and complaint investigations that address recurrent forest practice themes.
- Develop, field-test and implement policies and procedures that are results-oriented.

3. Objective:

Independent audits of industry and government's performance to reinforce the application of sound forest practices throughout the Province.

Strategies:

- Random selection and implementation of a combination of:
  - Compliance audits of major licences and the BC Timber Sales Program (BCTS)
  - Area-based sets of audits involving compliance audits of major licences, BCTS and small tenure licences in the selected area. As well, there may be an enforcement audit on the appropriateness of government's enforcement of the Code in the area.
  - Annual compliance and enforcement audits pursuant to the Nisga'a treaty.
- Active cooperation with those developing forest practices auditing and, specifically, with the various certification programs operating within B.C.

4. Objective:

An efficient and respectful investigation process that responds to public concerns about forest practices, validates sound forest practices, and recommends improvements where needed.

Strategies:

- Continue to carry out investigations in a logical, thorough, unbiased and non-adversarial manner.
- Maintain regular, forthright and transparent contact with all investigation participants.
- Encourage resolution of public concerns.

5. Objective:

A review and appeal program that is responsive to concerns raised by members of the public and that fosters the implementation/interpretation of the Code that is consistent with its intent.

Strategies:

- Evaluate public requests.
- Monitor administrative decisions.
- Initiate or participate in administrative appeals when it is in the public interest to do so.

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6. Objective:

A timely reporting process that fairly and objectively represents the general public interest.

Strategies:

- Continue to produce analyses and reports that are concise, logical and relevant.
- Maintain reliance on professional staff to conclude reports.
- Shorter timelines for completion.

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7. Objective:

World-class expertise in auditing and investigating forest practices.

Strategies:

- Maintain and expand expertise through regular comprehensive training and recruitment criteria.
- Support and encourage staff contribution to national and international forums.
  Performance Measures

Output Measures

	Relates to Objective(s)
Quantitative reporting on numbers of requests, response times, costs, etc.	4, 5, 6
A report on the redesigned role of the Board.	1
Timeliness: Percentage of audits published within the fiscal year. Dependent on area, scope, findings and representations.	3
Timeliness: Target to report on an investigation. 80% will be completed in *x* months.	4
Number of quality-assured audit projects.	3, 6, 7
Published audit, investigation, and appeal manuals that inform the public about continuous improvements in the way the Board conducts its business.	3, 4, 5
A report on audit procedures that takes into account other forest practices audits.	1, 3, 7
Results-oriented and area-based reports on topics of public concern.	2, 3
Percentage of decisions made by the Board within 45 days on forest development plan reviews requested by the public. Dependent on timely notification to the Board.	5
Number of contributions at forums.	7
Contributions to the field of forest practices auditing and investigating.	7

Outcome Measures

	Relates to Objective(s)
Percentage of participants who believe that complaint investigations contributed to the resolution of issues.	4
Percentage of review and appeal participants who believe that the Board's actions in reviewing and appealing decisions further the public interest.	5
Level of public satisfaction with the audit, investigation and appeal performance, based on measures of public feedback.	3, 4, 5
Degree to which Board work promotes sustainable and continually improving forest practices, as evidenced, for example, by the implementation of Board recommendations.	2, 3, 4, 5
Board reports referenced by others as credible sources of information about forest practices.	2, 3, 4, 7
Reports are relevant and address issues of concern to the public.	2, 4, 5, 6

Performance Targets

	2002/03 Base	2003/04 Target	2004/05 Target	2005/06 Target
Quantitative reporting on numbers of requests, response times, costs, etc.	To be reported in the Annual Report.	To be reported in the Annual Report.	To be reported in the Annual Report.	To be reported in the Annual Report.
A report on the redesigned role of the Board.	N/A	1	N/A	N/A
Timeliness: Percentage of audits published within the fiscal year.	100%	100%	100%	100%
Timeliness: Target to report on an investigation; 80% will be completed in *x* months.	8 mo.	7 mo.	7 mo.	7 mo.
Number of quality-assured audit projects completed and published — compliance, area-based, Nisga'a.	2 4 1	4 3 1	4 3 1	4 3 1
Published audit, investigation, and appeal manuals that inform the public about continuous improvements in the way the Board conducts its business.	3	3	3	3
A report on audit procedures that recognizes and complements industry forest practices audits.	N/A	1	N/A	N/A
Results-oriented and area-based reports on topics of public concern.	3	3	3	3
Percentage of decisions made by the Board within 45 days on forest development plan reviews requested by the public.	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number of contributions	6	6	6	6

at forums.				
Contributions to the field of forest practices auditing and investigating.	To be determined.	To be determined.	To be determined.	To be determined.
Percentage of participants who believe that complaint investigations contributed to the resolution of issues.	45%	50%	55%	55%
Percentage of review and appeal participants who believe that the Board's actions in reviewing and appealing decisions further the public interest.	62%	65%	70%	70%
Level of public satisfaction with the audit, investigation and appeal performance, based on measures of public feedback.	To be determined through a public survey.	To be determined through a public survey.	To be determined through a public survey.	To be determined through a public survey.
Degree to which Board work promotes sustainable and continually improving forest practices, as evidenced, for example, by the implementation of Board recommendations.	To be reported in the Annual Report.	To be reported in the Annual Report.	To be reported in the Annual Report.	To be reported in the Annual Report.
Board reports referenced by others as credible sources of information about forest practices.	To be determined. Requires reviewing how many times the Board's reports are referenced as credible sources in other publications.	To be determined. Requires reviewing how many times the Board's reports are referenced as credible sources in other publications.	To be determined. Requires reviewing how many times the Board's reports are referenced as credible sources in other publications.	To be determined. Requires reviewing how many times the Board's reports are referenced as credible sources in other publications.
Reports are relevant and address issues of concern to the public.	To be determined through a public survey.	To be determined through a public survey.	To be determined through a public survey.	To be determined through a public survey.

Consistency with Government Priorities

Results-based Forest Practices Code that eliminates needless cost while maintaining environmental standards.

The Board has established credibility and can be an important part of the checks and balances government puts in place to accompany the move to a results-based regulatory environment that places more responsibility with the forest industry and professionals.

The Board can contribute to adaptive management by independently assessing the objectives government has set and how well they are being achieved on the ground, based on credible field information. Recommendations for adjustments can then be developed to ensure effectiveness of results based regulations.

A leading edge forest industry that is globally recognized for its productivity and environmental stewardship.

Board audits will help ensure that industry protects the environment while achieving sound management of the public's forests. Independent reports and information provided to interested groups and organizations outside of B.C. will assist industry in achieving global recognition of its forest practices and environmental stewardship.

Board audit procedures will take into account independent forest practices audits, and will eliminate duplication and increase the overall value of the collective audit effort.

Adopt scientifically based, principled management to ensure sustainability

The Board's field-based information will be useful to government in assessing how well the objectives developed under a result-based Code are being achieved on the ground and in identifying improvements to ensure intended results are achieved.

The work of the Board can provide independent, credible information that the government could choose to use in support of its international marketing campaign for B.C. forest products.

Open government and accountable decision making

In reporting its findings to the public, the Board supports government in being open and accountable for its forest practices and its enforcement of forest regulations.

Resource Summary

Forest Practices Board	2002/03 Restated Estimates	2003/04 Estimates	2004/05 Plan	2005/06 Plan
Operating Expenses ($000)				
Totals	4,822	4,344	3,307	3,307
Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs)				
Totals	33	26	24	24
Capital Expenditures (Consolidated Revenue Fund) ($000)				
Totals	125	100	100	100

Resource Summary

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Operating Expenses ($000)				
Totals	4,822	4,344	3,307	3,307
Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs)				
Totals	33	26	24	24
Capital Expenditures (Consolidated Revenue Fund) ($000)				
Totals	125	100	100	100